DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Agency for Toxic Substances
and Disease Registry
Atlanta, GA 30333

May 22, 2012

Ms. Denise Zeno
Remedial Project Manager
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 2
290 Broadway
New York, New York 10007-1866

Re: Evaluation of Indoor Air Sampling at Cabo Rojo Ground Water Contamination site in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico

Dear Ms. Zeno:

Thank you for the opportunity for the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to provide public health input related to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s investigation of potential source areas for the Cabo Rojo Ground Water Contamination Superfund site ("the Site") in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico. ATSDR appreciates the prompt response of EPA to collect indoor air samples at schools and other buildings potentially impacted by vapor intrusion of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into indoor air from groundwater, as recommended in our letter dated February 24, 2012.

ATSDR has reviewed validated results of EPA's indoor air, sub-slab, and ambient (outdoor) air sampling for VOCs collected the weeks of February 27 and March 19, 2012, in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico. The enclosed health consultation documents our evaluation of the results from both phases of sampling and recommendations related to this issue. The focus of the health consultation is on indoor air sample results. Results of sub-slab soil gas and ambient air sampling taken at the same time as the indoor air sampling are discussed as they apply to the indoor air evaluation.

To summarize our conclusions and recommendations:

- No harmful levels of VOCs were found in indoor air of any of the locations in the recent sampling events. However, sub-slab sampling shows continued high VOC concentrations beneath several buildings.

- ATSDR recommends follow-up sampling over time to verify that indoor levels of VOCs do not increase. ATSDR will provide public health input as EPA develops a site-specific sampling strategy.
- Further investigation may be warranted to discover the source or sources of benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene, and trimethylbenzenes in soil gas beneath one location. These contaminants are not known to be site-related.

We appreciated the opportunity to work with you and Ms. Arlene Anderson, EPA Region 2 On-Scene Coordinator, during community involvement activities held the week of May 14. Thank you for including ATSDR in your site work. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I can be reached at (770) 488-0768 or by email at JDyken@cdc.gov.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Jill J. Dyken, PhD, PE
Environmental Health Scientist
Eastern Branch
Division of Community Health Investigations (proposed)

Enclosure (1)

cc:
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